

Diplomacy in Reverse

Compromising Friendships and Weakening America

June 2010



Context: President Obama's supposed attempts to befriend every country, including those that despise the United States and everything it stands for, have led some to believe that America has become a weaker international force. The administration's softening of messages to those who either seek to do the U.S. harm or those who seek to challenge the United States in any forum, be it economic or military, does not convey America's strength and determination in pursuing its own interests. What's worse is that President Obama has slighted the friends of the United States in the meantime. In an effort to seem less like President George W. Bush (no matter the *good* relationships former President Bush had with many countries), President Obama has mistreated those with whom America's relationship is most important.

Here are some examples of Obama's disregard for America's closest allies:

1. **Israel:** Recently, a flotilla of six ships tried to break Israel's sea blockade of Gaza. The fleet was ordered to change course to the port of Ashdod, where Israel allows humanitarian aid into Gaza. Israeli forces were forced to defend themselves against a fleet whose largest ship was filled with terrorist affiliates armed to fight, which resulted in the deaths of nine people. Israel has blockaded the Gaza strip since Hamas took control of the Palestinian territory in 2007. Hamas has been smuggling thousands of Iranian rockets, missiles, and other weaponry into Gaza in order to fire on Israel's cities. If this blockade were not in place, Iran would establish a permanent port for an untold amount of weaponry to be delivered into Gaza. Hamas continues to refuse to recognize Israel's right to exist, renounce violence, or accept previous accords signed between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. The Obama administration condemned the blockade, saying that Israel needs to take a different approach. By doing this, the Obama administration has turned its back on Israel's sovereign right to defend itself. Israel cannot permit the free flow of weapons and war materials to Hamas from the sea. Israel has every right to defend itself, and the United States should stand firm with its ally.
2. **Israel, again:** On May 28th, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference ended with yet another U.S.-supported international rebuke of Israel. The U.S. joined 188 other nations in signing the conference's resolution document which explicitly pressures Israel to place all of its nuclear facilities under U.N. safeguard, submit to inspections, and ratify the NPT. The language approved by the U.S. also contains a provision introduced by Egypt that calls for a U.N.-sanctioned conference on establishing a nuclear-free Middle East, which Israel has justifiably opposed for several years. The document not only publicly reprimands America's only democratic ally in the Middle East, but also fails to mention perennial nuclear outlaw Iran even once. Again, the **Obama Administration** has stood by while Israel is censured by the U.N. and Iran is given another pass.
3. **Israel, yet again:** In March, President Obama invited Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to the White House, made non-negotiable demands, and left the Prime Minister by himself with his aides to go have dinner in private. Press were not allowed at the

"What you're doing here undermines the security of our troops who are fighting in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. That endangers us, and it endangers regional peace."
-Vice President Biden scolding Benjamin Netanyahu on **building settlements in Jerusalem**

event and the President took no pictures with the Prime Minister. Even press secretary Robert Gibbs did not deny claims that the meeting rebuked the Prime Minister, who refuses to prohibit housing construction in East Jerusalem. This sort of behavior was, until recently, unheard of from an American president.

4. **Israel, one more time:** When Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu announced his plans to continue with existing plans for housing construction in East Jerusalem, President Obama and Vice President Joe Biden criticized Netanyahu's plans as a step in the wrong direction toward peace with the Palestinians. Although Israel has talked about engaging in peace negotiations *without concessions made in advance*, Obama and Biden still leaned on Netanyahu to make such concessions before getting to the negotiating table.

5. **Great Britain:** President Obama turned his back on America's closest European ally when he decided not to get involved between Britain and Argentina over a sovereignty dispute in the Falkland Islands. The Obama administration decided not to back Britain's claim that oil exploration near the islands is sanctioned by international law and says the dispute is only a bilateral issue. Though officially not taking sides, this sends a clear message that Obama is backing the Argentine government, which is supported by Hugo Chávez and threatening to mount a naval blockade.



6. **Great Britain – again:** Great Britain has historically remained one of America's greatest friends and allies. However, during the beginning of the Obama administration, the White House returned a bust of Winston Churchill that was loaned to the United States by Great Britain after 9/11. Great Britain graciously extended their loan to the Obama administration, only to have their thoughtfulness denied. Many Brits still talk about the disrespect of this gesture.

7. **Afghanistan:** President Hamid Karzai is an important player to ensure Afghani cooperation in the War on Terror. President Bush frequently spoke to Karzai during his presidency in an effort to get as much Afghani cooperation against Islamist militants as possible. He held weekly video conferences with Karzai and developed a close relationship with the Afghani leader. President Obama, however, has been critical and rude toward



the Afghani leader. The Obama administration and President Karzai's disagreements for how to pursue a reconciliation process between the Taliban insurgents and government officials [strained the relationship](#) so far that Karzai refused to talk to anyone but Ambassador Karl Eikenberry, General Stanley McChrystal (commander of American and NATO forces in Afghanistan), and an unnamed CIA station chief who, along with a special forces team, protected Karzai during his visit to the Pashtun tribes in an attempt to persuade them to fight against the Taliban. President Obama also dropped in on President Karzai in a [surprise visit to Afghanistan](#). The Afghani palace was notified that the President of the United States would be arriving in two hours. The administration had planned the trip at least two days prior. This showed an arrogant lack of respect for Karzai, as his time was clearly not considered for the visit. This certainly won't help in America's goal of finishing, and more importantly, winning, the war in Afghanistan.

8. [Poland and the Czech Republic](#): President Obama recently cancelled a missile defense agreement signed by former President Bush with Poland and the Czech Republic. The plan, signed in August 2008, stationed 10 interceptors on a base in Poland and built a radar station on Czech territory. The purpose of the missiles was to provide strategic defense deterrence for Europe from rogue states like Iran. The missile plan essentially brought the United States closer to key European allies, as both the Czech Republic and Poland trusted the U.S. to provide defenses and protection. Nonetheless, President Obama succumbed to Russian pressure and disarmed Poland and the Czech Republic of important defenses.



9. [South Korea](#), [Colombia](#), and [Panama](#): Three major trade agreements have been signed with geo-strategically important American allies, and all would likely be approved by the U.S. Congress, yet the Obama Administration refuses to submit these agreements to Congress. The United States and South Korea have maintained a close relationship for decades. On June 30, 2007 the U.S. and Korea signed the KORUS Free Trade Agreement. The agreement was a significant step toward a booming economic relationship with South Korea, however President Obama has completely ignored the agreement and has made no efforts to move the agreement through Congress. Similarly, former President Bush signed a free trade agreement with Colombia, but could not finalize the deal before the end of his term.

“I don't have a strict timetable, because I'm going to have to consult with Congress obviously on this issue. We've got a lot on our plates, if you haven't noticed.”
 -President Obama, answer to Reuters reporter on advancing the free trade agreement with Columbia.

President Obama has yet to take any steps toward “progress” and “change” for trade with Colombia, despite its ongoing alliance with the U.S. in a sensitive region. The United States completed a free-trade deal with Panama during the Bush administration. Despite huge bipartisan support from Congress and the high number of benefits for both American and Panamanian businesses, President Obama has yet to submit the proposal to Congress for approval (which it will gladly receive).

10. [Australia and Indonesia](#): Indonesia, a democratic country where Obama spent much of his childhood, is home to the largest number of Muslims in the world. [Indonesia](#) has remained a key strategic ally in Asia and has assisted the United States in counterterrorism initiatives. Indonesians were greatly [disappointed](#) when President Obama cancelled his trip for a second time to tackle the healthcare overhaul in March. Australia is a key U.S. ally and has fought alongside American soldiers for every war in the past century. President Obama’s visit to Australia was important, as it would have shown America’s gratefulness for Australia’s willingness to fight alongside American soldiers. Yet President Obama postponed his trip to both Indonesia and Australia—*three* times.

11. [Azerbaijan](#): Azerbaijan is a Caspian strategic ally. It is sandwiched between Russia and Iran and is a secular country with a majority Muslim population. Azerbaijan has opened its energy resources to the United States and is an important player in global energy security. The oil-producing country immediately offered assistance in the aftermath of [9/11 and the War on Terror](#). The country offered its airspace and the use of its airports during Operation Iraqi Freedom. In addition, Azerbaijan, a majority-Muslim nation, sent its troops to serve alongside U.S. forces in Iraq. Despite the provision of Section 907 in the Freedom Support Act, which prohibits direct assistance to Azerbaijan due to regional conflicts and its war with Armenia, Azerbaijan has remained a friend of the United States. However, relations with the former Soviet republic have declined since the Obama administration took office. During the Nuclear Security Summit in April, President Obama did not invite Azerbaijan but invited its neighbor, Georgia, and its enemy, Armenia. The Azerbaijani president, Ilham Aliyev recently made [comments](#) about reconsidering Azerbaijan’s relationship with Washington.



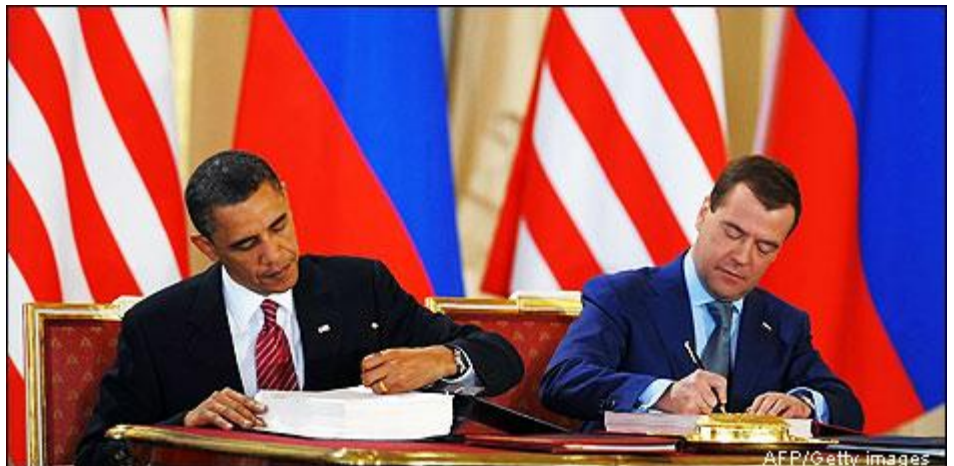
Here are some examples of President Obama being soft on nations America shouldn't trust:

1. **Iran**: Iran's audacious nuclear ambitions and verbal attacks on the West are obvious tests of America's patience. Iran is a rogue state that has failed to comply with critical international nuclear regulations. This, along with the leadership's anti-Western, pro-Palestinian sentiments, and support for terrorist organizations, is reason enough to be less-than-friendly toward Iran. Iranian freedom-fighters are suffering at the hands of a repressive regime, yet so far, President Obama's policy has consisted mainly of shaking a finger at Ahmadinejad.



Although the Obama administration has imposed sanctions against Iran, they are clearly not harsh enough to deter Iran from nuclear armament. President Obama should not be sending [yearly greetings](#) to the Islamic state, which he does. The United States needs to [toughen up its tone](#) to make sure Iran understands the consequences it could face should it attempt to use its nuclear technology for military purposes. In addition, the Obama administration should not play nice with Iran because of the message it sends to our Israeli allies who face the greatest threat from a nuclear Iran. The administration needs to take tough steps to prevent an international nuclear situation. America's continued unwillingness to stand up to such an oppressive regime have clearly emboldened the Iranian regime.

2. **Russia**: President Obama recently signed the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) with Russian President Dmitriy Medvedev to reduce the nuclear stockpile in the United States and Russia in an effort to encourage rogue states like Iran and North Korea to comply with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.



However, the treaty essentially reduces American missile defenses while allowing Russia to continue modernizing their defenses. Attempting to equalize defenses between the two

countries is impractical due to the differences between both countries' economies, military might, and international influence. Russia is by no means on board with President Obama's idea of a nuke-free world. In 2006, former Russian President Putin emphasized the importance for Russia to have strong nuclear defenses. President Medvedev unilaterally decided that Russia would reserve the right to disregard the treaty if America's missile defense system appeared to be a threat to its national security. Since the signing of the treaty, Russia has yet to lay down tough sanctions on Iran or otherwise take steps to rein in rogue states with which it has close ties.

3. **North Korea:** North Korea's increasingly audacious nuclear plans are an indication of disregard for the Obama administration. Although President Obama has made comments against North Korean nuclear development, he has yet to provide a strong message or decisive action to intimidate Kim Jong Il into suspending any harmful activity. North Korea is a rogue state that has harmed, and continues to threaten, American interests, such as South Korea. Currently, about 28,000 American troops are stationed in South Korea. The Obama administration has a direct interest in protecting the lives of American soldiers. North Korea's nuclear capability and rogue behavior should not be ignored. Recently, South Korean officials blamed Pyongyang for a [ship sinking](#) that killed 46 members of the South Korean navy. Tensions between the two countries have risen immensely, and North Korea has vowed to torpedo any ship that crosses into North Korean waters. Although North Korea has been a rogue state for many decades, it has certainly been bolder since the Obama administration took power.



4. **Palestinian Territories:** President Obama's increasingly soft stance on radical Islamism is apparent in his behavior toward the Palestinian territories. Not only has Obama failed to be stern with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Hamas, but he made the President of the Palestinian National Authority Mahmoud Abbas a happy man when he insisted on a housing freeze in Israel. Abbas has long insisted on Israeli housing freezes in Jerusalem in an attempt to limit Israeli presence there. Hamas, a known terrorist organization, stated that a housing freeze is an essential precondition for peace negotiations.

“Nobody's suffering more than the Palestinian people from this whole process. And I would like to see — if we could get some movement from Palestinian leadership — what I'd like to see is a loosening up of some of the restrictions on providing aid directly to the Palestinian people.”
-President Obama

5. **Syria**: Syria is known to be tied to the Lebanese terrorist organization, Hezbollah. Hezbollah is a known terrorist group that continues efforts to assist the Palestinians and Hamas. Although President Obama recently [renewed sanctions](#) imposed by the Bush administration against Syria after the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, he recently sent a new ambassador to the Middle Eastern nation. President Obama removed the American block on Syria becoming a member of the World Trade Organization despite the fact that Syria continues to aid Iran in arming Hezbollah. Hezbollah, Syria, and Iran are all known enemies of Israel, an important American ally. Syria, in addition, continues to facilitate the movement of jihadists and weapons into Iraq. Regardless of the danger Syria poses to the United States, Obama eased a few export licenses for the Middle Eastern country, mostly in the area of aircraft.



6. **Honduras**: After Honduran President Manuel Zelaya was exiled to Costa Rica after illegally trying to redraw the constitution, the Obama administration backed him and overlooked actions taken by the Honduran Supreme Court and Congress. The Honduras Supreme Court ordered the removal of the President to defend the rule of law. The Honduran Congress later swore in its leader, Roberto Micheletti, as the new head of state after voting to remove Mr. Zelaya for “manifest irregular conduct” and “putting in present danger the state of the law”. The Obama administration branded the event “a coup d’état” and said that “existing tensions and disputes must be resolved peacefully.” President Obama also [stated](#), “It would be a terrible precedent if we start moving backwards into the era in which we are seeing military coups as a means of political transition rather than democratic elections.” However, leftist leader Manuel Zelaya was ignoring the concept of democratic elections by attempting to stay in power indefinitely. Suspicions were raised about Manuel Zelaya tampering election results which led to his win. Corruption charges have also recently been brought to Zelaya and the increasingly leftist leader ordered all of the country’s TV and radio stations to carry [government propaganda](#) for two hours a day. President Obama joined Hugo Chávez, Raul Castro, and Daniel Ortega in his support for Honduras’ ousted ex-president.



7. **Venezuela**: President Obama’s chummy behavior toward Hugo Chávez has raised eyebrows due to Chávez’s openly anti-American, anti-capitalist views, his propensity for oppressing his own people, and his not-so-secret support of terrorist and anti-American

"It's unlikely that as a consequence of me shaking hands or having a polite conversation with Mr. Chavez that we are endangering the strategic interests of the United States."
-President Obama, after an [amiable handshake](#) with leftist Venezuelan President Chavez, a staunch, merciless critic of America.

activities throughout the Western Hemisphere. The Venezuelan leader has also made several insulting remarks about both former President Bush and President Obama. In a radio interview, Chávez called President Obama a “poor ignorant person,” and said he has the “same stench” as former President George W. Bush.

Despite this, President Obama amiably and excitedly shook the leftist president’s hand at a summit in Trinidad, which to many, gave off a signal of weakness to a major critic of the United States.



8. **China:** While China and the United States depend on each other greatly in matters such as trade and finance, there is tension between the two nations. For example, the United States recently engaged in a [weapons sale](#) to Taiwan worth about \$6.4 billion. China currently has hundreds of missiles pointed toward Taiwan as a warning to the small island that it will face consequences if it attempts to move toward formal independence. Because of this, the weapons sale between Taiwan and the U.S. was not looked upon favorably by China. China also provides [North Korea with aid](#). North Korea is a rogue state that seeks to harm, and has harmed, American interests like South Korea. Additionally, the U.S. has been more than critical of China’s [human rights](#) problems, including issues of internet and media censorship. A 2009 [report](#) by the U.S. State Department states that in China, “serious human rights abuses included extrajudicial killings, executions without due process, torture and coerced confessions of prisoners, and the use of forced labor, including prison labor. The government continued to monitor, harass, detain, arrest, and imprison journalists, writers, dissidents, activists, petitioners, and defense lawyers and their families, many of whom sought to exercise their rights under the law.” The Chinese also did not approve of President Obama’s meeting with the [Dalai Lama](#), the exiled Tibetan leader, as in China he is considered a terrorist, responsible for social unrest. Despite all of this, President Obama showed weakness and submission when he bowed eyes-down to China’s President Hu Jintao during the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, D.C. this year, a gesture that raised eyebrows worldwide.



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